GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COMMUNICATIONS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4509
ANSWERED ON:29.03.2017
Review of Performance of TRAI
Singh Shri Rama Kishore

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has conducted any review of performance of Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI);

(b) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether TRAI has made several recommendations recently for providing cheaper internet services; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the action taken by the Government thereon?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE (IC) OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS &
MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS
(SHRI MANOJ SINHA)

(a) & (b) Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) was established under the TRAI Act, 1997 as a statutory regulatory body mandated, inter-alia, to regulate the telecommunication services, protect the interests of service providers and consumers of the telecom sector, to promote and ensure orderly growth of the telecom sector, etc. Thus, TRAI performs its functions as an independent regulator as per the TRAI Act, 1997. There has been no Review of performance of TRAI conducted by the Government.

(c) & (d) Recently, Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has issued two recommendations to Department of Telecommunications (DoT) pertaining to Internet services on "Encouraging Data usage in Rural Areas through Provisioning of Free Data", and "Proliferation of Broadband through Public Wi-Fi Networks" on 19.12.2016 and 09.03.2017 respectively. The recommendations made by TRAI include :-

â€¢ In order to bridge the affordability gap for the persons residing in rural areas and to support Government efforts towards cashless economy by incentivizing digital means, the Authority recommends that a scheme under which a reasonable amount of data, say 100 MB per month may be made available to Rural subscribers for free.
â€¢ The cost of implementation of the scheme may be met from USOF.
â€¢ Introduce a new framework for setting up of Public Data Offices (PDOs) which will lead to introduction of new set of small players in the Wi-Fi service provisioning space, who will be able to contribute in a big way in making broadband available to the masses.

Government is examining these recommendations and has not taken any decision in this regard so far.

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